# CHINA BULLETIN

of the

**FAR EASTERN OFFICE**

**Division of Foreign Missions, NCCC/USA**

**475 Riverside Drive, New York 27**

Vol. IX, No. 22 December 7, 1959

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## "A GLORIOUS TEN YEARS"

This is the title of an article by Y. T. Wu in the September 21 Tien Feng, written as a part of this ten year celebration. The article is about 2-1/2 pages long, with the first and larger part devoted to an account of the general progress made by China during these ten years. Then comes a statement about what has happened to the church during this period.

"There has also been a profound change in the appearance of the church during these ten years. For a hundred years imperialism had used the Christian church as an instrument of aggression against China. The missionaries were the forerunners of aggressors, and these latter used missionary activity as a tool. Under the aegis of religion the devilish hand of imperialism reached into every village and city of our country; wherever the missionaries went there imperialism was at work, as the missionaries made little absolute monarchies for themselves. These missionaries were not preaching the gospel, but were sowing the poisonous seeds of a slave psychology among Chinese Christians, teaching them to worship the West and despise their own country. Under the authority of the unequal treaties the missionaries controlled court cases, perverted justice, interfered with China's internal affairs, enslaved the Chinese people, and made Christianity to appear in the eyes of the mass of Chinese people as a symbol for aggression. Under these conditions the Chinese Church became a tool of imperialist aggression, and thus between Chinese Christians and the Chinese people there developed an almost impassable gulf.

"After Liberation the Chinese Christian Church broke off the shackles of imperialism. In 1950 the Three Self Patriotic Movement arose, which denounced imperialism and severed relations with it, and this began a radical change in the Chinese Church. It was now no longer a tool to be used by foreign mission boards, but became a church under the control of patriotic and imperialism-hating Chinese Christians. This made a great change in the relations of Chinese Christians and the Chinese people.

"The Three Self Movement made Chinese Christians aware of the greatness and preciousness of their own country, made them realize that Christianity had been used as an imperialist tool, and opened their eyes to the glorious future of their own country. All of the great central Movements since Liberation, and especially those connected with the establishment of socialism, have educated and disciplined us Chinese Christians, so that we have determined to wipe out all traces of imperialist thinking and stand with the People, laboring on behalf of our country to establish socialism and preserve world peace.

"Imperialism had formerly trained a band of reprobates to be tools of imperialist aggression. These reprobates put on the cloak of religion and opposed China's great central Movements, showing their enmity to the Chinese people by spreading rumors and engaging in destruc-

Issued bi-weekly to keep mission boards and missionaries informed on Christian work in China. Information from Chinese church magazines and other Chinese sources is passed on as objectively as possible, with a minimum of interpretation. When interpretation is necessary, it is enclosed in parentheses as the comment of the editor. ANNUAL RATES: Domestic, $2.50; Overseas, Firstclass $4.00, Secondclass $3.00. Airmail $5.00 in 15¢ zone, $7.00 in 25¢ zone.

tive activities. But as the political thinking of most Christians was raised to a higher level, these reprobates were exposed and eliminated. After the elimination of these reprobates who carried on counter-revolutionary activities under the cloak of religion, the Chinese Church was purified and enabled to preach the pure gospel.

"The rumors spread by imperialists and reactionaries both before and after Liberation made many Christians afraid of the Communist Party, so that they doubted its religious policy. But ten years of experience have shown us that Christians, as well as believers in other religions, have complete liberty of religious belief; church activities such as Sunday worship, prayer meetings, Sunday Schools, baptism of new members, and ordination of pastors, and church agencies such as theological seminaries, the Bible House, and publishing houses, all have proceeded as usual; religious belief is not only protected but also respected. These ten years have shown that the Party is not only determined to carry out its policy of freedom of religious liberty, but that its protection and concern for us are all-embracing. Christians have an entirely equal status among the people, on every level of the people's congresses Christians as well as believers in other religions are deputies.

"During the past year or more, all Chinese church workers and some of the laymen have taken part in the socialist education movement. As a result of this movement they have recognized more clearly that they must accept the leadership of the Party, establish the standpoint of the proletariat, and walk the road of socialism. Under the impetus of the Great Leap Forward, we have made corresponding adjustments in the work of the church and the arranging of religious activities, and this has resulted in still further changing the former semi-colonial appearance of the church.

"Most Chinese Christians are patriotic. Many of them in their various stations have taken part in industrial production and been honored as model workers. They appreciate deeply how dark the former China was and how bright the new China is. Shanghai Christians recently held a discussion meeting, in which many Christian laborers denounced the old China for the sorrows it had brought to them. One woman had had to do away with her newborn babe. One man, constantly without work, lived a half-starved existence, and when cholera struck he had no money for a doctor, and of his eleven children only four remained alive. Liberation brought in a new day for the workers, their livelihood was vastly improved, and these brothers and sisters now lead a peaceful and happy life.

"This great change is the glory of the Chinese Christian Church, and is still another demonstration of the fact that the Chinese people have now recovered their standing. But at the same time it was a great blow to the imperialists who had been using the church for its aggressive purposes. The imperialists are now seeking to learn a "lesson" from the fact that the Chinese Church has cut off relations with them, and doing their utmost to establish a new strategy. Therefore Chinese Christians must continue to be on the alert against these imperialist designs, and make their anti-imperialist patriotic activities an answer to every plot of the imperialists to use the Chinese church as their tool.

"The past ten years have been glorious ones. The great accomplishments of these years have stirred not only the Chinese people, but all people throughout the world who love peace and have a hope for the future. Our Great Leap Forward, and our determination to continue to press forward, both demonstrate that our task is a righteous one, and that such a righteous task will not be hindered or perverted by any power whatever. The latest meeting of the Party has already urged upon us to increase production and decrease consumption, so that in two years we may complete our second five year plan. This is a clarion call to warlike action. I hope that the whole Chinese Christian Church will eagerly answer this call, and use its utmost endeavors to hasten the establishment of a socialist society."

## FURTHER AUSTRALIAN REPORTS

E. Lyall Williams, principal of the College of the Bible of the Churches of Christ in Australia (Disciples of Christ), was one of the six Australian visitors to China referred to in the last issue. He has an article in the December World Call entitled "China's Churches Are Still Serving," and from this we are able to supplement the news contained in our previous issue.

They visited the United Christian Bookshop, and were each given a copy of the Bible in

Chinese. They were told that the Christian publishing societies present an estimate of their needs to the government and receive an annual quota of paper for publication purposes.

Regarding church property he says, "We were informed that the reduction of places of worship was a matter on which there were conferences between church and government. Church properties are free from taxation. This does not apply to parsonages unless the residence of a pastor is incorporated in the general church property. In cases of emergency some financial help may be given by the state. Some of the smaller properties, which were abandoned as places of worship, have been rented out."

They were told that there are about a thousand Christians in church on a Sunday in the four churches in Peking which remain open. In Shanghai there is a weekly attendance of about 15,000 in its 23 church centers. (Note Endicott's report of 19,000 -- apparently both figures are rather rough estimates.) Theological school enrollment was reported to them as follows: Peking 56, Nanking 60, Canton 22.

Sunday School work continues, but the Sunday Schools are not very well attended. "The Communist indoctrination of children in the schools does not help Sunday Schools." They were told that open air preaching is still possible. "Christians may preach in the open and quietly distribute literature to people who line up to get it."

## THE NATURE OF CHURCH "UNION" IN CHINA

The suggestion made in the last number (in the Australian Free Church Visit Report) that the union of churches in China is more like the worship together of various congregations during the slack summer months as we know it in the USA than a real merger, is now confirmed both by further Australian reports and from other sources. Disciples representative E. Lyall Williams states, "There is no union of churches, but simply a co-operation through the Three Self Movement. Through an assembly the various communions appoint a president and secretary, with a committee." This worship together is intended to be the prelude to ultimate union, but one of the Three Self leaders states plainly that no rule of faith has been worked out for the new church, nor will there be for a good many years, until the various churches have time to grow together. The old denominational dioceses, presbyteries, etc., are functioning as before, for the present. Even some of the distinctive emphases are being retained, for example, the Seventh Day Adventists hold their worship services on Saturdays, and the separate forms of communion for the different denominations are still being observed, though in the same building, and with much more inter-communion than formerly. The Sheng Kung Hui (Anglican) House of Bishops rarely meets any more, but they continue to carry on business by correspondence. The growing together which they anticipate is beginning to show results, for example, it is stated that the Pentecostalists are now willing to concede that Anglicans, Presbyterians, etc., can be Christians.

## OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION IN COMMUNES

Chen Cheng-jen, Deputy Director of the Rural Work Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, had an article on the above subject in the October People's Daily of Peking.

Contrary to what one might think, the basic ownership of means of production is vested not in the commune, but in the next lower level, the "production brigade". This is the name given to the work unit corresponding in size to the higher stage co-operatives out of which the commune was created. Some ownership has been transferred to the commune, but to a very limited degree. On a still lower level than the production brigade is the production team, and whenever they are willing to take on a fixed production quota, the ownership is transferred to this unit. But that too is on a limited scale -- most of the ownership remains at the Production Brigade level. This fact, the writer notes, has led some people to say that the commune organization does not fundamentally differ from the previous co-operative organization. That, however, is not the case; the commune ownership, though small in amount, is nevertheless vital and significant.

There is also still a certain amount of individual ownership. "Houses, clothing, bedding, furniture, and deposits in banks and credit co-operatives will remain their own property after they join the commune and will always belong to them." Also "members can retain odd trees around their houses, small farm tools, small instruments, small domestic animals and poultry;

they can also continue to engage in some small domestic side line occupations, on the condition that these do not hamper their taking part in collective labor."

As to distribution, the basic method is to take the production brigade as the unit. After the state taxes and the amount to be paid to the over-all commune organization have been deducted, the rest is distributed to workers, by a system in which about 70% is according to the number of workdays put in, and the other 30% on a basis of universal distribution.

Since this is an explanatory article for local consumption, it can be accepted as a factual statement of what is considered standard practice in the communes of China today.

## MISSIONARY NEWS

Mrs. Lydia Scratch, formerly in the Christian Herald Orphanage in Foochow, representing the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, died at her home in Toronto on September 24. Miss Martha Pyle, formerly with the Methodist Mission in Soochow and later in Shanghai, died in Kansas City on November 10 at the age of 94.

## CHURCH NEWS

The pope has donated the equivalent of US $100,000 for the restoration in Taiwan of the once famous Fu Jen University, and has named Paul Yu Pin, former Archbishop in Nanking, as its head.

Anglican Chao Fu-san, Dean of Yenching Union Theological Seminary, was in Australia in November attending the Australia New Zealand Peace Congress. He was scheduled to preach in the Methodist Church in Sydney on November 22. On November 19 Mr. Chao met with the Australian Council of the World Council of Churches. A friend who saw him said, "He is looking as young as ever--urbane and genial to the nth degree, on the surface. Only once I glimpsed the tension he is under."

According to Dean Chao, there had just been concluded, prior to his leaving for Australia, and presumably in Peking, "a three weeks' conference of the leaders of the church in China on the problems facing the church and the work of the church in the future."

Rev. C. F. Gribble, General Secretary for Overseas Missions in the Methodist Church of Australasia, states that he saw a good deal of the Rev. Newton Chiang while in Peking, but did not see P. H. Wang at all. From another source we learn that P. H. Wang, though reduced in rank, has not been imprisoned or denounced. "He found it hard at the age of 61 to see younger people taking the important place he once held. But now he is reconciled to it, and is going to be all right." He has apparently been assigned the comparatively minor task of writing up the sins of the missionaries.

Dr. T. C. Chao is now 74 years of age, and not as active as formerly. Since his political rehabilitation in 1954 he has lectured occasionally in the Yenching Theological Seminary, and was once invited to give a series of lectures in Nanking.

Dr. C. W. Lu, the former President of Yenching University, was described by Dean Chao as "happy in his philological studies," another of the minor tasks to which those who are looked upon as politically unreliable are assigned.

Sheng Kung Hui Bishop Kimber Den is living in Hangchow, and apparently not under restriction of any sort, though there is nothing in the news to indicate that he has been able to resume the tasks of the episcopacy.

A Three Self Movement leader states of Wang Ming-tao, "He was definitely against us. He stirred up his people to acts of sabotage."

It is possible that the news of Luther Shao's suicide was unfounded. News apparently received directly from Nanking states, "Mr. and Mrs. Shao are well, only their eldest son died of T.B. some years ago." We are checking further on this. Dr. Shao was, or is, the leading preacher in the Disciples Church in China.

The Endicott Newsletter for November still does not give the full picture of church life in China which I was hoping to get from them. Mrs. Endicott does comment on the situation in Shanghai, saying that they found there "the most vigorous evidences of church life." They were told that 19,000 people attend church in Shanghai every Sunday. "Neither the form nor the content of their worship is controlled by the government in any way. By their own study and discussion they have become a truly indigenous church, free of the stigma of foreign dominance and integrated happily into the quick tempo of national life."

## GENERAL NEWS

Australian Methodist Secretary C. F. Gribble sums up his impressions of his one week in mainland China in these words: "There is tremendous drive and energy in the life of China today, and any thought of counter-revolution or of staging a come-back by the Formosan Regime is hopelessly wishful thinking."